

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON

Does Religion Pay?

"Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."—1 Tim. 4: 8.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR to one and all!

There is a gloomy and passive way of waiting for the events of the opening year to come upon us, and there is a heroic way of going out to meet them, strong in God, and fearing nothing. When the body of Caligula was found on the battle-field it was found far in advance of all his troops, and among the enemy; and the best way is not for us to lie down and let the events of life trample over us, but to go forth in a Christian spirit determined to conquer.

The papers were made out, and some of you have just entered into business partnerships, and others of you take higher positions in the commercial establishments where you were engaged, and others have entered upon new enterprises, and there were last week in these cities ten thousand business changes. You are expecting prosperity, and I am determined, so far as I have anything to do with it, that you shall not be disappointed, and, therefore, I propose, as God may help me this morning, to project upon your attention a new element of success. You will have in the business firm, frugality, patience, industry, perseverance, economy—

A VERY STRONG BUSINESS FIRM, but there needs to be one member added, mightier than they all, and not a silent partner either—the one introduced by his text: "Godliness, which is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come."

I suppose you are all willing to admit that Godliness is important in its eternal relations; but perhaps some of you say: "All I want is an opportunity to say a prayer before I die, and all will be well." There are a great many people who suppose that if they can finally get safely out of this world into a better world, they will have exhausted the entire advantage of our holy religion. They talk as though religion were a mere nod of recognition which we are to give to the Lord Jesus on our way up to a heavenly mansion; as though it were an admission ticket, of no use except to give in at the door of Heaven. And there are thousands of people who have great admiration for a religion of the shroud, and a religion of the coffin, and a religion of the bier, and a religion of the cemetery, who have no appreciation of a religion for the bank, for the farm, for the factory, for the warehouse, for the jeweler's shop, for the broker's office. Now, while I would not throw any slur on a post-mortem religion, I want this morning to enlarge on

ANTE-MORTEM RELIGION.

A religion that is of no use to you while you live, will be of no use to you when you die. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come." And I have always noticed that when the grace is very low in a man's heart, he takes a great deal in prayer-meetings about coffins, and about graves, and about churchyards. I have noticed that the healthy Christian, the man who is living near to God, and is on the straight road to Heaven, is full of jubilant satisfaction, and talks about the duties of this life, understanding well that if God helps him to live right He will help him to die right.

Now, in the first place, I remark that *godliness is good for a man's physical health.* I do not mean to say that it will restore a broken-down constitution or drive rheumatism from the limbs, or neuralgia from the temples, or pleurisy from the side; but I do mean to say that it gives one such habits and puts one in such condition as is most favorable for physical health. That I believe, and that I avow. Everybody knows that buoyancy of spirit is good physical advantage. Gloom, unrest, dejection are at war with every pulsation of the heart, and with every respiration of the lungs. It lowers the vitality, it slackens the circulation, while exhilaration spirit pours the very balm of heaven through all the currents of life. The sense of insecurity which sometimes hovers over an unresolute man, or pounds upon him with the blast of ten thousand trumpets of terror, is most debilitating and most exhausting, while the feeling that all things are working together for my good now, and for my everlasting welfare, is

CONDUCTIVE TO PHYSICAL HEALTH.

You will observe that godliness induces industry, which is the foundation of good health. There is no law of hygiene that will keep a lazy man well. Fleury will stab him, erysipelas will burn him jaundice will discolor him, gout will cripple him, and the intelligent physician will not prescribe antiseptic, or febrifuge, or anodyne, but saws and hammers and yardsticks and crowbars and pickaxes. There is no such thing as good physical condition without positive work of some kind, although you should sleep on down of swan, or ride in carriage of softest upholstery, or have on your table all the luxuries that were poured from the wine-vats of Isaphan and Shiraz. Our religion says: "Away to the bank! away to the field! away to the shop! away to the factory! do something that will enlist all the energies of your body, mind, and soul." "Diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord"; while upon the bare back of the rider and the drone comes down the sharp lash of the apostle as he says: "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat."

Oh, how important in this day, when so much is said about anatomy and physiology and therapeutics, and some new style of medicine is ever and anon springing upon the world, that you should understand that the highest school of medicine is the school of Christ, which declares that "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come." So if you start out two men in the world with equal physical health, and then

one of them shall get the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ in his heart, and the other shall not get it, the one who becomes a son of the Lord Almighty will live the longer. "With long life will I satisfy thee, and show thee my salvation."

Again I remark that godliness is GOOD FOR THE INTELLECT.

I know some have supposed that just as soon as a man enters into the Christian life, his intellect goes into a bedwarding process. So far from that, religion will give new brilliancy to the intellect, new strength to the imagination, new force to the will, and wider swings to all the intellectual faculties. Christianity is the great central fire at which Philosophy has lighted its brightest torch. The religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is the fountain out of which learning has dipped its clearest draught. The Helicon poured forth no such inspiring waters as those which flow from under the throne of God clear as crystal. Religion has given new energy to Poesy, weeping in Dr. Young's "Night Thoughts," teaching in Cowper's "Task," flaming in Charles Wesley's hymns, and rushing with angelic splendor through Milton's "Paradise Lost." The religion of Jesus Christ has hung in studio, and in gallery of art, and in Vatican the best pictures—Titian's "Assumption," Raphael's "Transfiguration," Rubens's "Descent from the Cross," Claude's "Burning Bush," and Angelo's "Last Judgment." Religion has made the best music of the world—Haydn's "Creation," Handel's "Messiah," Mozart's "Requiem." It is possible that a religion which builds such indestructible monuments, and which lifts its ensign on the highest promontories of worldly power, can have any effect upon a man's intellect but elevation?

Best, I commend godliness as the best mental discipline—better than belles lettres to purify the taste; better than mathematics to harness the mind to all intricacy and elaboration; better than logic to marshal the intellectual forces for onset and victory. It will go with Hugh Miller, and show him the footprints of the Creator in the red sandstone. It will go with the botanist, and show him celestial glories encamped under a curtain of a water-lily. It will go with the astronomer on the great heights where God shepherds the great flock of worlds that wander on the hills of heaven, answering His voice as He calls them all by their names.

GOOD FOR THE DISPOSITION.

Again I remark, that godliness is profitable for one's disposition. Lord Ashley, before he went into a great battle, was heard to offer this prayer: "O Lord, I shall be very busy to-day; if I forget Thee, forget me not." With such a Christian disposition as that, a man is independent of all circumstances. Our piety will have a tinge of our natural temperament. If a man be cross and sour and fretful naturally, after he becomes a Christian he will always have to be armed against the rebellion of those evil inclinations; but religion has tamed the wildest nature; it has turned fretfulness into gratitude, despondency into good cheer, and those who were hard and ungovernable and uncompromising have become pliable and conciliatory. Good resolution, reformatory effort, will not effect the change. It takes a mightier arm and a mightier hand to bend evil habits than the hand that bent the bow of Ulysses, and it takes a stronger lasso than ever held the buffalo on the prairie.

A man cannot go forth with any human weapons and contend successfully against these Titans armed with upturn mountain. But you have known men into whose spirit the influence of the gospel of Christ came, until their disposition was entirely changed. So it was with

TWO MERCHANTS IN NEW YORK.

They were very antagonistic. They had done all they could to injure each other. They were in the same line of business. One of the merchants was converted to God. Having been converted, he asked the Lord to teach him how to bear himself toward that business antagonist, and he was impressed with the fact that it was his duty, when a customer asked for certain kinds of goods which he had not, but which he knew his opponent had, to recommend him to go to that store. I suppose that is about the hardest thing a man could do; but being thoroughly converted to God, he resolved to do that very thing; and being asked for a certain kind of goods, which he had not, he said: "You go to such and such a store, and you will get it." After a while, merchant number one found these customers coming so sent, and he found, also, that merchant number one had been brought to God, and he sought the same religion. Now they are good friends and good neighbors—the grace of God entirely changing their dispositions.

"Oh," says some one, "I have a rough, jagged, impetuous nature, and religion can't do anything for me." Do you know that Martin Luther and Robert Newton and Richard Baxter were impetuous, all-consuming natures, yet the grace of God turned them into Him.

THE MIGHTIEST USEFULNESS.

A manufacturer cares but very little for a stream that slowly runs through the meadow, but a strong torrent that leaps from rock to rock, and rushes with mad energy through the valley, and out toward the sea. Along that river you will find fluttering shuttles and grinding mill and flashing water-wheel. And a nature the swiftest, the most rugged, and the most tremendous, that is the nature God, turns into great usefulness. Oh, how many that have been ignominious, and hard to please, and irascible, and more bothered about the mote in their neighbor's eye than about the beam like ship-timber in their own eye, who have been entirely changed by the grace of God, and have found out that "Godliness is profitable for the life that now is, as well as for the life to come."

Again I remark that religion is GOOD FOR WORLDLY BUSINESS.

I know the general theory is, the more business the less religion; the more religion the less business. Not so thought Dr. Hanks, in his "Biography of a Christian Merchant," when he says: "He

grew in grace the last six years of his life more than at any time in his life; during those six years he had more business crowding him than at any other time." In other words, the more worldly business a man has, the more opportunity to serve God. Does religion exhilarate or retard worldly business? In the practical question for you to discuss. Does it hang like a mortgage over the farm? Is it a bad debt on the ledger? Is it a lien against the estate? Does it crowd the door through which customers come for broadcloths and silks?

Now, religion will hinder your business if it be a bad business, or if it be a good business wrongly conducted. If you tell lies behind the counter, if you use false weights and measures, if you put sand in sugar, and beet-juice in vinegar, and hard in butter, and sell for one thing that which is another thing, then religion will interfere with that business; but a lawful business, lawfully conducted, will find the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

ITS MIGHTIEST AUXILIARY.

Religion will give an equipage of spirit. It will keep you from ebullitions of temper—and you know a great many fine businesses have been blown to atoms by bad temper; it will keep you from worry about frequent loss, it will keep you back from squandering and from dissipation, it will give you a kindness of spirit which will be easily distinguished from that mere store courtesy which shakes hands violently with you, asking about the health of the family, and there is no anxiety to know whether your child is well or sick; but the anxiety is to know how many dozen cambric pocket-handkerchiefs you will take, and pay cash down. It will prepare you for the practical duties of every-day life. I do not mean to say that religion will make us financially rich, but I do say that it will give us, it will assure us of, a comfortable subsistence all the way through, and it will help us to direct the bank, to manage the traffic, to conduct all our business matters, and to make the most significant affair of our life a matter of vast importance, glorified by Christ therein principle. In New York City there was

A MERCHANT, HARD IN HIS DEALINGS

with his fellows, who had written over his banking house, or his counting-house room, "No compromise." Then when some merchant got in a crisis and went down—no fault of his, but a conjunction of evil circumstances, and all the other merchants were willing to compromise; they would take seventy-five cents on the dollar, or fifty cents, or twenty cents—coming to this man last of all, he said: "No compromise; I'll take one hundred cents on the dollar, and I can afford to wait." Well, the wheel turned, and after a while that man was in a crisis of business, and he sent out his agent to compromise, and the agent said to the merchants: "Will you take fifty cents on the dollar?" "No," "Will you take anything?" "We'll take one hundred cents on the dollar. No compromise." And the man who wrote that inscription over his counting-house door died in destitution. Oh, we want more of the kindness of the Gospel and the spirit of love in our business enterprises! How many young men have found in the religion of Jesus Christ a practical help? How many there are in this house to-day who could testify out of their own experience, that godliness is profitable for the life that now is! There were times in their business career when they went here for help, and there for help, and yonder for help, and not to help until they knelt before the Lord crying for His deliverance, and the Lord rescued them.

In a bank not far from our great metropolis—a village bank—an officer could not balance his accounts. He had worked at them day after day, night after night, and he was sick with death as a result. He knew he had not taken one farthing from that bank, but somehow, for some reason, inscrutable then, the accounts wouldn't balance. The time rolled on, and the morning of the day when the books should pass under the inspection of the other officers arrived, and he felt himself in awful peril, conscious of his own integrity, but unable to prove that integrity. That morning he went to the bank early, and he knelt down before God and told the whole

STORY OF MENTAL ANGUISH.

and he said: "O Lord, I have done right; I have preserved my integrity, but here I am about to be overthrown, unless thou shouldst come to my rescue. Lord, deliver me." And for one hour he continued the prayer before God, and then he rose and went to an old blotter that he had forgotten all about. He opened it, and there lay a sheet of figures which he only needed to add to another line of figures—some kind of figures he had forgotten, and knew not where he had had them—and the accounts were balanced, and the Lord delivered him. You are an infidel if you do not believe it. The Lord delivered him. God answered his prayer as He will answer your prayer, O man of business, in every crisis, when you come to Him.

Now, if this be so, then I am persuaded, as you are, of the fact that the vast majority of Christians do not fully test the value of their religion. They are like a farmer in California with fifteen thousand acres of good wheat land, and culturing only a quarter of an acre. Why do you not go forth and make the religion of Jesus Christ a practical affair every day of your business life, and all this year, beginning now; and to-morrow morning putting into practical effect this holy religion, and demonstrating that godliness is profitable here as well as hereafter?

How can you get along without this religion? Is your physical health so good you don't want this

DIVINE TONIC?

Is your mind so clear, so vast, so comprehensive, that you do not want this divine inspiration? Is your worldly business so thoroughly established that you have no use for that religion which has been the help and deliverance of tens of thousands of men in crises of worldly trouble? And if what I have said this morning is true, then you see what a fatal blunder it is when a man

adjourns to life's expiration the uses of religion. A man who postpones religion to sixty years of age gets religion fifty years too late. He may get into the kingdom of God by final repentance, but what can compensate him for a whole lifetime unrelieved and uncorrected? You want religion to-day in the training of that child. You will want religion to-morrow in dealing with that Western customer. You wanted religion yesterday to curb your temper. Is your arm strong enough to beat your way through the floods? Can you, without being encased in the mail of God's eternal help, go forth amid the assault of all hell's sharpshooters?

CAN YOU WALK ALONE

across these crumbling graves and amid these gaping earthquakes? Can you, waterlogged and mast-shivered, outlive the gale? Oh, how many there have been who, postponing the religion of Jesus Christ, have plunged into mistakes they never could correct although they lived eighty years after, and like serpents crushed under cart-wheels dragging their mangled bodies under the rocks to die; so these men have fallen under the wheel of awful calamity, crushed here, destroyed forever, while a vast multitude of others have taken the religion of Jesus Christ into every-day life, and first, in practical business affairs, and secondly, on the throne of heavenly triumph, have illustrated, while angels looked on and a universe approved, the glorious truth that "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life which now is as well as of that which is to come."

WOMEN WITH BEARDS.

How Science Has Come to the Relief of Such Afflicted Ones.

As a reporter sat in a cable car recently, he noticed a pretty young woman enter. Pretty, stylish and trim from head to foot—only one blemish, and that a decided, an humiliating one. She had a pronounced mustache that a youth of 20 would have envied her. Everywhere that one goes, in shops, churches, theatres, this disfigurement is noticed. Is there no remedy? Sensitive women will resort to any and every method to rid themselves of superfluous hair. Scissors, tweezers, yes, even razors are used, only to find that the blemish will return as fast as it is removed, and with additional strength. There are many fortunate cases. A young woman had a few straggling hairs on her face. She noticed them much more than anyone else, and grew actually morbid on the subject. One day while having her hair combed her hairdresser noticed them and told her he could remove them. He produced a small stone, and by her permission proceeded to rub them off, leaving her face smooth and blushing from the friction. He assured her that if they returned they would be much finer, scarcely to be observed. Instead, in a few days they appeared, and to her horror she found they were very much worse than before. In her despair she again used the stone which her hairdresser had persuaded her to use. This practice she kept up daily, until her face was in a frightful condition. However, a remedy has been found in electricity.

II. THE FORGIVEN SINNER.

I. Brought to Jesus: They come, bringing unto him a man sick of the palsy (3). Bring him hither to me (Matt. 17: 17). Then were they brought unto him little children (Matt. 19: 13). Behold, men bring on a bed a man that was palsied (Luke 5: 18). He brought him unto Jesus (John 1: 42). II. Forgiven through Faith: Jesus seeing their faith saith, ... thy sins are forgiven (5). As though hast believed, so be it done unto thee (Matt. 8: 13). According to your faith be it done unto you (Matt. 9: 29). A man is justified by faith (Rom. 3: 28). Let him ask in faith, nothing doubting (Jas. 1: 6). III. Forgiven of God: Who can forgive sins but one, even God? (7). Who forgiveth all thine iniquities (Psa. 103: 3). There is forgiveness with thee (Psa. 130: 4). I, even I, am he that blotth out thy transgressions (Isa. 43: 25). To the Lord our God belong... forgivenesses (Dan. 9: 9).

III. THE CONVICTED CAVALIER.

I. Doubt Rebuked: Why reason ye these things in your hearts? (8). Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? (Matt. 9: 4). Wherefore didst thou doubt? (Matt. 14: 31). Neither be ye of doubtful mind (Luke 12: 29). He that doubteth is condemned if he eat (Rom. 14: 23). II. Demonstration Granted: But that ye may know... (he saith to the sick)... Arise (10, 11). Take it by the tail... that they may believe (Exod. 4: 4, 5). Let me prove, I pray thee... And God did so (Jud. 6: 39, 40). The God that answereth by fire, let him be God (1 Kings 18: 24). The very words that I do, bear witness of me (John 5: 36). III. Conviction Reached: They were all amazed, and glorified God (12). Aaron... did the signs... And the people believed (Exod. 4: 30, 31). When all the people saw it... they said, The Lord, he is God (1 Kings 18: 39). We know: for no man can do these signs (John 3: 2).

Women Who Work in Iron Mills.

The fact is not generally known that women are already occupying places and doing work in iron mills and in manufactories of wire. Three years ago the men in a Pittsburg bolt manufactory gave so much trouble that they were displaced by women. The venture proved to be a marked success, so that the employers could not be induced to go back to men and boys. The wire mill which was established about that time, took up with the idea, and again everything worked satisfactorily. Then a hinge factory was opened to them and once more the women proved better workers, more reliable and less troublesome than their male rivals. How far the innovation will go cannot be estimated. Meanwhile girls as accountants and office helps are winning their way and by and by the boys will have to agitate for equal rights.

When all are left a man running ahead of his ticket does not get there first.

General Lyle wrote his beautiful composition "Antony and Cleopatra," which begins, "I am dying, Egypt, dying," on the night before his death. He had a premonition that he was going to die the next day.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

SUNDAY JANUARY 27, 1899.

Forgiveness and Healing. LESSON TEXT.

(Mark 2: 1-12. Memory verse, 10-12.)

LESSON PLAN.

TOPIC OF THE QUARTER: *Jesus the Mighty Worker.*

GOLDEN TEXT FOR THE QUARTER:

Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake.—John 14: 11.

LESSON TOPIC: *Forgiving the Sinful.*

Outline: 1. The Beneficent Saviour, vs. 1, 2. Lesson: 2. The Convicted Cavalier, vs. 3-12.

GOLDEN TEXT: *Who forgiveth all thine iniquities: who healeth all thy diseases.*—Psa. 103: 3.

DAILY HOME READINGS:

M.—Mark 2: 1-12. Forgiving the sinful.

T.—Matt. 9: 1-8. Matthew's parallel narrative.

W.—Luke 5: 16-26. Luke's parallel narrative.

T.—Psa. 23: 1-11. Blessedness of forgiveness.

F.—Isa. 43: 14-28. The forgiving Lord.

S.—Rom. 3: 19-31. The way of forgiveness.

S.—Rom. 5: 1-21. The fruits of forgiveness.

LESSON ANALYSIS.

I. THE BENEFICENT SAVIOUR.

I. Seeking Men: He entered again into Capernaum (1).

Jesus went about all the cities and the villages (Matt. 9: 35).

Go after that which is lost, until he find it? (Luke 15: 4).

The Son of man came to seek and to save (Luke 19: 10).

Ye did not choose me, but I chose you (John 15: 16).

II. Sought of Men: Many were gathered together (2).

Where is he that is born King of the Jews? (Matt. 2: 2).

And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus (Matt. 8: 34).

All are seeking thee (Mark 1: 37).

Sir, we would see Jesus (John 12: 21).

III. Teaching Men: He spake the word unto them (2).

The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings (Isa. 61: 1).

Seeing the multitudes, ... he opened his mouth and taught (Matt. 5: 1, 2).

He anointed me to preach good tidings (Luke 4: 18).

He whom God has sent speaketh the words of God (John 3: 34).

1. "It was noised that he was in the house." (1) A plain message; (2) By unpretentious messengers; (3) To willing hearers; (4) With great results.

2. "Many were gathered together." (1) At one place; (2) With one purpose; (3) With various motives; (4) With different results.

3. "He spake the word unto them." (1) The preacher; (2) The hearers; (3) The message; (4) The consequences.

II. THE FORGIVEN SINNER.

I. Brought to Jesus: They come, bringing unto him a man sick of the palsy (3).

Bring him hither to me (Matt. 17: 17). Then were they brought unto him little children (Matt. 19: 13).

Behold, men bring on a bed a man that was palsied (Luke 5: 18).

He brought him unto Jesus (John 1: 42).

II. Forgiven through Faith: Jesus seeing their faith saith, ... thy sins are forgiven (5).

As though hast believed, so be it done unto thee (Matt. 8: 13).

According to your faith be it done unto you (Matt. 9: 29).

A man is justified by faith (Rom. 3: 28).

Let him ask in faith, nothing doubting (Jas. 1: 6).

III. Forgiven of God: Who can forgive sins but one, even God? (7).

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities (Psa. 103: 3).

There is forgiveness with thee (Psa. 130: 4).

I, even I, am he that blotth out thy transgressions (Isa. 43: 25).

To the Lord our God belong... forgivenesses (Dan. 9: 9).

1. "They come, bringing unto him a man." (1) The man's forlorn condition; (2) The bearers' generous faith; (3) The Lord's gracious welcome.

2. "Son, thy sins are forgiven." (1) The Father's tender address; (2) The son's accumulated sins; (3) The Father's forgiving assurance.

3. "Who can forgive sins but one, even God?" (1) Man's greatest necessity; (2) God's greatest boon.

III. THE CONVICTED CAVALIER.

I. Doubt Rebuked: Why reason ye these things in your hearts? (8).

Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? (Matt. 9: 4).

Wherefore didst thou doubt? (Matt. 14: 31).

Neither be ye of doubtful mind (Luke 12: 29).

He that doubteth is condemned if he eat (Rom. 14: 23).

II. Demonstration Granted: But that ye may know... (he saith to the sick)... Arise (10, 11).

Take it by the tail... that they may believe (Exod. 4: 4, 5).

Let me prove, I pray thee... And God did so (Jud. 6: 39, 40).

The God that answereth by fire, let him be God (1 Kings 18: 24).

The very words that I do, bear witness of me (John 5: 36).

III. Conviction Reached: They were all amazed, and glorified God (12).

Aaron... did the signs... And the people believed (Exod. 4: 30, 31).

When all the people saw it... they said, The Lord, he is God (1 Kings 18: 39).

We know: for no man can do these signs (John 3: 2).

Thomas... said unto him, My Lord and my God (20: 28).

1. "Why reason ye these things in your hearts?" (1) Evil reasonings indulged; (2) Evil reasonings detected; (3) Evil reasonings rebuked; (4) Evil reasonings transformed.
2. "Whether is easier?" Christ's omnipotence (1) Displayed in material works; (2) Claimed in spiritual affairs; (3) Felt in personal experiences.
3. "We never saw it on this fashion." The peerless deeds of Jesus: (1) In working miracles; (2) In saving souls.

LESSON BIBLE READING.

FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

1. How it is Portrayed: Forgiving transgressions (Psa. 32: 1) Removing transgressions (Psa. 103: 12).

Blotting out transgressions (Isa. 43: 25; 44: 22).

Covering sin (Psa. 32: 1; 85: 2; Rom. 4: 7).

Blotting out sin (Acts 3: 19).

Casting sins into the sea (Micah 7: 19).

Remembering sins no more (Heb. 10: 17).

2. How it is Secured: From God alone (Dan. 9: 9; Mark 2: 7).

Through Christ (Mark 2: 5; Acts 5: 31).

Through Christ's blood (Matt. 26: 28; Rom. 3: 25).

According to the riches of grace (Eph. 1: 7).

Abundantly (Isa. 55: 7; Rom. 5: 23).

Freely (Isa. 55: 1; Rom. 3: 24).

Through faith (Mark 2: 5; Rom. 5: 1).

LESSON SURROUNDINGS.

The interval between the present lesson and the last one was brief (v. 1: "after some days"). At this point in the history the account of Matthew is most remarkable in its variation from the chronological order. The account of Luke sustains the order of Mark.

The place was Capernaum (Matt. "his own city"). The time, according to Robinson, was immediately before the second Passover (the only intervening event being the call of Matthew), probably at the beginning of April, 781, A. D. 28. According to Andrews, the date would be a few weeks later, in the early summer of the same year.